

INSCRIPTIONES POMPEIANÆ.

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INSCRIPTIONES POMPEIANÆ;

OR,

SPECIMENS AND FACSIMILES

OF

ANCIENT INSCRIPTIONS

DISCOVERED

ON THE WALLS OF BUILDINGS AT

POMPEII.



LONDON:  
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.

MDCCXXXVII.

## INSCRIPTIONES POMPEIANÆ.

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*Harrow, Dec. 12. 1837.*

— MY DEAR P—,

You will remember that when we visited Pompeii together in the summer of 1832, you chose to indulge yourself in some pleasant humour on the attention which I paid to the ancient inscriptions which are scrawled on the walls of the buildings and streets of that place. I have put off my retaliation for your pleasantry as you see, to a distant day, but it is arrived at last. I intend now to revenge myself on you for it by sending you some of these same inscriptions, with a few observations upon them:—

Et quota pars hæc sunt rerum quas vidimus ambo,  
Te mihi jucundas efficiente vias?  
Seu rate cœruleas pictâ sulcavimus undas,  
Esseda nos agili sive tulere rotâ.  
Sæpe brevis nobis vicibus via visa loquendi,  
Pluraque si numeras verba fuere gradu.  
Sæpe dies sermone minor fuit; inque loquendum  
Tarda per aestivas defuit hora dies.  
Est aliquid casus pariter timuisse marinos:—  
Et modo res egisse simul; modo rursus ab illis  
Quorum non pudeat posse referre jocos — \*

which is an additional reason why I now address myself to *you*.

\* Ovid. Pont. ii. 10.

I should indeed have abstained from this undertaking as unnecessary, had any notice whatever been taken of these fragments to which I now invite your attention, by any of the writers who have described the antiquities of Pompeii. The Neapolitan antiquaries and topographers have altogether passed them by; and in the numerous guidebooks written by Ultramontans, there is scarcely any allusion to their existence.\* As they seem to me to possess some little interest, and as the communication of them to others has, at least, the merit of novelty, I have thought it worth while to put them here upon record. To proceed then to my subject.

Lucian tells us that it was a common practice for idle people to scribble their thoughts on the town walls in his day; and from him it appears that at Athens the sides of the Dipylum,—the great western gate of that city, were much used in this way. He† has preserved one of these inscriptions. We know too, from Aristophanes, that this was also the case in his age. The greatest compliment which the Thracian king could pay to the Athenian city, was to daub on the streets of his northern capital the words ΑΘΗΝΑΙΟΙ ΚΑΑΟΙ!‡ *Athenians for ever!* In later days too, in the city of Rome, the eloquence of walls was very powerful. It produced, according to Plutarch §, the Agrarian Laws of Tiberius Gracchus, who was excited

\* I except one article in the *Bulletino dell' Instituto* of Rome, and a very few scattered hints on the subject in Sir W. Gell's *Pompeii*.

† Lucian, tom. iii. p. 287. *Comp. Callim. Ep. Ixx.*

‡ Aristophanes, *Achar.* 144. Cf. Berger's note, and Creuzer, pref. Plotin. p. xxxv.

§ Plut. in *T. Gracch.* c. 8. Cf. Martial, *Ep. i. 118.* : —  
Scriptis postibus hinc et inde totis.

to propose those democratical measures by the popular expressions which he read on the walls and porticos of the Eternal City.

You will remember the house of the author (now, alas ! no more) of the *Pursuits of Literature*, on the Pizzofalcone at Naples. I must confess that its antique interior, in a classic country, gave me much pleasure. I liked it the better for the hospitable *SALVE* inscribed on the threshold of the door ; nor was the momentary shock which was produced by the sight of that grim artificial dog which crouched like another Cerberus near it, with the huge uncials *CAVE CANEM* staring you in the face from the wall above him, ill compensated by the pleasant associations of antique scenes and manners connected with these illusions ; and the household morality of the pithy apophthegms *FESTINA LENTE, NE QVID NIMIS*, and *SVSTINE ET ABSTINE*, engraved on the stucco walls of the saloon and library, was, I hold, a species of decoration neither useless nor unpleasing. You liked it, I am sure, quite as well as mural arabesques of Japanese jugglery, or riddling hieroglyphics.

Let us then, my dear P——, ascend once more, in fancy at least, our Neapolitan carratella, and drive off to Pompeii ; and if you will put yourself under my guidance, we will go again through the particular streets in which the inscriptions I shall specify are to be found.

It should be premised that these inscriptions are, as you will see, for the most part scratched with a pointed stylus on the hard red stucco with which those buildings are covered. It is owing to the exceeding solidity of this material, that the words carelessly traced upon it by hands

which have now withered and crumbled in the dust for more than seventeen hundred years, are still, in many cases, as legible as these printed characters which are now before you.

You will allow me first of all, in due courtesy to yourself, to introduce you to a line of your favorite Latin poet. It is written on the outside of the north wall of the Chalcidicum of Eumachia \*, thus : —

(ΛΑΚΙΝΙΔΙΟΥ  
CΙΔΕΣΟϹΟϹ  
ΜΥΤΑΡΙΤ  
ΟΛΥΞΙϹ

Here you recognise a line from Virgil. It is in the eighth Eclogue (v. 70.) —

*Carminibus Circe socios mutavit Olyxis —*

perhaps inscribed in this spot by the hand of one of the poet's own friends, who enjoyed his intimacy while he lived and sung in this neighbourhood —

— *Virgilium quo tempore dulcis alebat  
Parthenope, —*

on the shores of whose bay, — the *vicina Vesero Ora jugo* †, — he once dwelt, and now lies buried.

\* The position of which you will easily find by reference to the Plan of Pompeii, No. 29., in the *Atlas of the Society for Diffusing Useful Knowledge*.

† Virg. *Georg.* ii. 224.

Some grammatical observations might be here made on the form *Olyxis*, which will not be neglected by the future editors of Virgil.\* Heyne's reading, *Ulixi*, which is against all the MSS., is not a fortunate one. The word

Ὦ ΦΥΛΛ

(Ulyxe) appears engraved on a gem referred to by Lanzi †, and may be compared with the form in this inscription, which, like the population of Pompeii, contains a tinge of Greek mixed with Latin.

It is rather surprising that Horace, as far as our evidence goes, does not seem to have been a favorite author at Pompeii. Of all the Latin poets who flourished before its destruction by the volcano in its neighbourhood, he would appear most likely to have been popular here. He was probably known in person to many of the Pompeians. He once frequented the tepid waters and myrtle groves of Baiae, and had no doubt enjoyed the breezes of Sorrento, and explored the other delightful retreats of this beautiful coast: but while, as you will see, several of his contemporaries are more fortunate in this respect, not a syllable from the writings of Horace survives on the walls of Pompeii. Perhaps the very novelty of his metres, which he considered as his own peculiar merit, was the cause of this.

We hear much of the diffusion of literary tastes among all classes of people in our own age and country; and

\* Compare Bentley, Hor. Od. i. vi. 7.; Ramsbotham's Gr. Lat. Gram. § 29. P. 55.

† Saggio di Lingua Etrusca, i. p. 168.

comparisons, injurious to other nations and times, are founded on this assumption. This is hardly fair. I should much question whether all the walls of all the country towns in England, would, if Milton were lost, help us to a single line of the *Paradise Lost*. *Our Pompeii*s do not yet exhibit the words of *our* Virgils, nor does it seem probable that they soon will. The leisure thoughts and stray musings of our provincials do not wander much in such directions: — but to return to Pompeii.

If we walk down the street which lies to the north of the Chaleidicum of Eumachia, we shall enter what was once the Forum of Pompeii. Crossing the Forum, and keeping a little to the left, you approach the Basilica or Law Court of the town. This place will, no doubt, call together in your mind some agreeable professional associations; we will pause then a little here.

In Westminster Hall, Shakspeare, Milton, and Dryden, are remembered by those who plead there; but I doubt whether the mixed audience who listen to the pleadings, would, if left to themselves, beguile their leisure moments by references to the writings of these poets. This seems to have been otherwise in the small provincial town of Pompeii.

Two lines, familiar to us from our childhood, are found twice inscribed on the right-hand wall, near the principal entrance of the Basilica. They served, perhaps, as the consolation of a weary client while listening to the prosecution of his tedious suit. There is in their orthography a little admixture of Greek, and a little ignorance of Latin, which was probably common enough in the dialect of the Greek colonists of this part of Italy, who had a national

claim to write and converse *Canusini more bilinguis*. The lines are as follows :—

ανιδροτετλαμικηνσαχσοδιτευδολιγυανδα  
ρυλλατηνμολισαχγαντυληρα.

You have here the popular distich of Ovid\*, though the words are *parcè distorta* :—

*Quid potè tam durum saxso, aut quid mollius undā?*  
*Dura tamen molli saxsa cavantur aquā.*

The variation of *Quid potè tam* from the poet's *Quid magis est*, is a curious Græcism ; and in the case of the word *saxso* an English tiro will proudly correct the false Latinity of an Italian scribe who wrote in the Augustan age !

At a little distance from this point, we have four lines from two different poets :—

σιλδλιτολαντιτηλσανηλναχαφεντι  
ανδιλτεχεψινελδλρεεληγαλανσ  
σινπολαδδατιμισιαιετσιλικσατινχνι  
σιρδииио вбдустам сомниети скуесерам

You see here two lines of Ovid, followed by two of his friend Propertius. The poets are here united as formerly when one of them said :—

*Sæpe suos solitus recitare Propertius ignes,*  
*Jure sodalitio qui mihi junctus erat.†*

The first two of the above four lines are, as you will see :

*Surda sit oraunti tua janna, laxa ferenti :*  
*Audiat exclusi verba receptus amans*

\* Ovid. A. A. i. 475.

† Ovid. Trist. iv. 10. 44. 53.

which will be found in our editions of Ovid, *Amor.* l. ciii. 77.: the two latter —

*Janitor ad dantis vigilet, si pulsat inanis  
Surdus in obductam sonnet usque seram\* —*

are still extant in Propertius (iv. v. 47.), where the printed copies have pulset: the orthography of the accusative *dantis* in the third line of inscription is a conclusive evidence of the practice of the best ages of Latinity in that particular respect, and may serve to confirm the assertions of Bentley and Heyne in their respective prefaces to Horace and Virgil † upon it.

We pass from Ovid to the patron of his *Fasti*, Germanicus. The following date, scratched on the stucco of the wall before us, carries us back in imagination from the present year, A. D. 1837, to A. D. 18. You there read: —

TI CAE SARE TERTIO GERMANICO  
CAESAR. I T E R . C O S

This was a critical period in the history of the noble Germanicus.‡ It was the year which intervened between

\* *Cp.* Plaut. *Asin.* i. iii. 89.

*Si affer, tum patent; si non est quod des, ades non patent.*

† P. xli. Cf. Gell. N. A. xiii. 20.

‡ At this mention of Tiberius, I may observe that on one of the *columns* in what is called the Quartiere dei Soldati, at Pompeii, are inscribed the words C A N I D I A N E R —. Whether they contain an allusion to Nero as bearing any resemblance in character to Canidia, both of whose poisonings and incantations, as well as those of Folia, were probably notorious to the *otiosa Neapolis, et omne vicinum oppidum* (Hor. *Epod.* v. 43.), I do not attempt to determine. For the *sobriquets* of Tiberius, see Sueton. *Ner.* 45., *adscriptum et columnis &c.* Canidia seems to have been a general term for a *renfieu*, Heindorf, Hor. p. 242.

his splendid triumph, gained by his German conquests, and his melancholy death at the Syrian Antioch.

This inscription remained visible for sixty years after it was here first written; it was then buried for seventeen hundred by the ashes of Vesuvius, and promises to survive as many more. It is, I apprehend, the oldest Latin MS. in existence.

You will observe that the writer has determined the controversy which Cicero was unable to decide. Cicero in doubt between *Tertium* and *Tertio*, discreetly recommended to Pompey, who had applied to him as arbiter on the subject, to compromise the matter, and write *TERT.*\* Our scribe is a bolder man, and writes at full length *TERTIO*.

*Vixere fortis ante Agamemnona*, but no record remains of their courage. See the fickleness of fortune! for while great battles have been fought, and splendid victories won, without leaving a trace behind them of their splendour or greatness, you will find on the wall before you an advertisement of a game of *rackets*, which was to be played here seven hundred years before the conquest of England. *Enim vero Di nos quasi pilas homines habent*. You see there traced on the cement the following words:—

AMIANTHYS ET APHRA TERTIUS IUDANT  
CUM HEDYSIO IUCUNDUS NOLANVS PETAT  
NUMERET CIVIS ET STACVS AMIANTHVS

i. e., as I conceive,

*Amianthus, Aphra, Tertius, Iudant cum Hedygio, Iucundus Nolanus  
petat, numeret Cives et Stacvs Amianthus*—

\* Aul. Gell. x. 1.

Some of the persons here mentioned — they are either slaves or freedmen — appear in a marble fragment of an inscription preserved in the Studii at Naples, which came from Pompeii. It is this : —

TERTIVS  
EPAPHRA  
HABER  
CITVS  
ISTACIDIAE L· F· MIN· AVG  
EX D· D·

Here you recognise the names of Tertius, Epaphra (both appellations familiar to us from a very different source, namely, the Epistles of St. Paul \*), and Citus, all of which appear in the former inscription.

The name Epaphra is an instance of the rule so well illustrated by Bentley† in his letter to Mill, which prescribed that the appellatives of slaves, which in Greek terminated in *as*, were to be Latinised into *a*, which was not the case with *free* Greek names of the same termination. Thus the slave carried the badge of slavery in his very name, till the happy moment when he

— momento turbinis exit  
MARCUS *Dama*. ‡

'*Ἐπαφρᾶς*, the slave in Greek, became in Latin Epaphra (and so the name ought to stand in our Bibles), while

\* See Rom. xvi. 22.; Coloss. i. 7. iv. 12.; Philipp. v. 23. Grotius (ad Lue. init.) considers him to be the same person as Epaphroditus.

† ii. p. 347. Dyce's edition.

‡ Persius, v. 78.

Anaxagoras the *philosopher* retained his original termination,

Id quod Anaxagoras sibi sumit.

*Lucret.* i. 876.

To return to our game. The best commentary on it is a sentence in one of Seneca's\* letters to his friend Lucilius (the one which precedes his curious description of the Grotto of Paüsilypo, through which we passed the other day), where he congratulates himself on being able to prosecute his studies to a certain extent even while sitting over a noisy bath-room †, where games at rackets were going on. "Ecce," says the philosopher, "varius clamor me circumsonat: supra ipsum balneum habito; si vero pilicrepus super vencrit, et numerare cœperit pilas, actum est." The pilicrepus is explained to mean the person *qui pilā ludit*, in a gloss of Isidorus ‡; the etymology of the word is ascertained from the lines of Statius § which describe the bath of Claudio Etruscus:—

"Quid nunc strata solo referam tabulata *crepantes*  
Auditura *pilos*, ubi languidus ignis inerrat  
Ædibus et tenuem volvunt hypocausta vaporem." ||

I find that this same word occurs in another inscription on this wall, and connected with this same Epaphra, who was probably distinguished for his skill in this game.

\* Epistola, lvi.

† Quippe (says Bentley on Hor. Sat. i. 6. 126. *fugio campum lusumque trigonem*) a pile lusu balnea semper adibant, aut, &c.

‡ See Lipsius on the passage of Seneca, and particularly Turneb. Adver. vii. 4.

§ *Sylva*, l. v. 57.

|| Compare especially, the very curious metrical inscription in *Orcellus Inser.* Lat. i. p. 451., Gruter, 637., where the word occurs twice.

~~E·P·A·P·H·R·A·A·P·H·R·A·E·D·V·F~~  
~~N·O·N·F~~

that is,

*Epaphra, pilicrepus non es;*

a line of erasure has been drawn through the words by some one who did not approve of their jealous detraction from the professional merits of Epaphra. There seems to have been a company of *Pilicrepi* at Pompeii, if we may judge from an electioneering inscription once visible on a wall in this town, and now preserved in the collection at Naples, and in the work of the Herculanean Society.\*

*A V E T T I V A L F I R M U M*  
*A E D · O · V · F · I · R · P · O · V · F · P I L I C R E P I · F A U T E*

that is †,

*A. Vettium Firmum*  
*AEdilem Oro Vos Facite, Dignum Republica,*  
*Oro Vos Facite; PILICREPI facite.*

This is an appeal to the *Pilicrepi* to VOTE FOR FIRMUS at the next election of municipal officers; perhaps for the same reasons as the lovers of a more modern game might

\* Herculaneum, Dissert. Isagog. p. 66. Tavole, p. 1. Tav. x.

† This inscription and others similar to it, have been generally considered as invocations of favour from the *AEdile* or other officer specified in them, and not as solicitations of votes for him before his election. That the latter is the true interpretation may be gathered from the inscriptions in Tav. xi. of the Diss. Isag. and other documents of the same nature.

have been called upon, a few years ago, to support its parliamentary patron. To conclude our notices of this same player, I refer to another allusion to him which is still visible here: —

EPAPHRAGLA  
BER ES.

that is,

*Epaphra, glaber es;*

which requires no other explanation than is given by the directions of the cook in Plautus\* to his lacquey while dressing the dinner: —

Tu istum gallum, si sapis,  
*Glabriorem reddes mihi quam volsus Ludiu' st. v.*

Can you discover the meaning of the following words?

LJSTACIDIAE QVENNQV(ENO  
BARBARYS IVLEM IHIEST.

They seem to refer to the lady mentioned in the inscription from the Neapolitan Studii†; and may express her sentiments to be, that whoever did not ask her to supper (literally, whomsoever she did not sup upon) was to her as bad as a Barbarian.

\* Aulect. ii. 9. 7. where see the note of Turnebus. Ludii adolescentes erant tuniculari induti insignes galanti et ensiferi peltatique, qui omnibus circensibus et theatralibus pompis in versum incedebant, Salii similes. Si qui corum essent grandiusculi, vellebantur et *glabri* reddebantur. Compare Orell. Inser. Lat. i. p. 172.

† Her name is inscribed on the podium of the amphitheatre here. Ibid. p. 444.

*Listacidiae* (i. e. γνωμη) *Quem non exeo, barbarus ille mihi est.*

Catullus laughs at the vicious pronunciation of his friend Arrius\*, but bad spelling was probably too common in his time to provoke his satire. We have a curious instance of it here. The name of the building in which we are is in several places inscribed on its walls; but in no instance that I can find, is it correctly spelt. It is always written

BASSILICA

As specimens of the same inaccuracy I select from the same spot,

AMIANTM QVOTIMAE ORO OROVOS

that is,

*Amianum quod timaeo (timeo) Oro Vos.*  
*In that I fear Amianthus, I implore your aid.*

SOMIUS CORNELIO IOIVS PENDRE

that is,

*Somius Cornelio (Cornelio) jus pendre (perendie?)*

that is,

*Somius threatens Cornelius with an action the day after to-morrow.*

These words were probably scrawled by some slave on the stucco while the lawyers of Pompeii were engaged in pleading here; a circumstance which suggested the above threat.

\* Carm. lxxviii.

Suggested too, by the place, seem to have been the following:—

*QVOD PRETIUM LE GI*

that is,

*Quod pretium legi?*

which may be compared with the

*Auro pulsata fides; auro venalia jura;  
Aurum lex sequitur;*

of Propertius\*; and the

*Quod vocis pretium?*

in a somewhat different sense, of Juvenal's seventh satire.

*TVENIM ME DOCES*

*Tu enim me doces?*

A literal translation of the σὺ διδάσκεις ἡμᾶς, in St. John's Gospel†: it was, no doubt, a proverbial expression.

We turn from the bad spelling of Pompeian slaves to a little of their good humour. Here you will see a letter from one of them to his fellow-slave: it is a very laconic one. You will perceive in it an attempt to parody the pompous style of diplomatic despatches, such as those of Cicero.‡

M· T· M· F· CICERO· S· D· CN·  
POMPEIO· CN· F· MAGNO, IMPERATORI

\* iii. 43. 49.

† ix. 34.

‡ Ep. Div. v. 7.

Ex literis tuis quas publice misisti cepi una cum omnibus *incredibilem voluptatem*, &c.; or again this,

M· T· C· Q· VALERIO Q· F· ORCAE,  
LEG PROPRÆT· S· P· D\*

Non *moleste fero* eam necessitudinem quæ mihi tecum est, notam esse quām plurimis, &c.

Our slave then, scribbling on the wall, writes as follows:—

PYRRHVS. C<sup>ON</sup>LEG<sup>AE</sup> SAL  
MOLESTE<sup>E</sup> FERO QUOD  
AUDIVI — TE MORTUUM  
ITAQUE VALE

that is,

PYRRHUS GETAE †  
CONLEGAE SAL.  
Molesté fero, quod  
audivi — Te mortuum.  
Itaque VALE.

PYRRHUS TO  
GETA HIS COL-  
LEAGUE HEALTH.  
I take deeply to  
heart what I  
have heard—  
that you are  
deceased. Therefore  
FAREWELL.

\* Ep. Div. xiii. 5.

† This word is uncertain.

Cicero in his Pompeian villa here could not have written in a more statesman-like style.

An effusion of railery, somewhat similar, is the following; it is a slave's character:—

*CO SIVS NEQUITIA EST  
MAGNIVSSIMA E*

that is,

*Cosmus nequitiae est magnissima.*

The new superlative *magnissimæ*, coined for the occasion, may remind you of the story current in these parts, of his Eminence Cardinal York, who was irritably tenacious of his royal dignity, and when asked at dinner in too familiar style, as he thought, whether he could taste a particular a viand: "Non ne voglio," he replied; "perche *Il Rè*, mio padre, non ne ha mangiato mai, e *La Regina*, mia madre, *maiissimo*."

You perhaps remember hearing a person say to his friend in the Corso at Rome, "Io non sono grande, e la mia moglie è piccola; ciò non ostante, i miei figli sono propri granatieri;" and a similar somewhat ludicrous intimation of the conjugal infidelity,

*þygl'oi: te yovai rikva ð'ð'ker' ioxðra xarp'i,*

which is now the curse of Italy, is presented on this wall by the following:—

*ZETEMA.*

*MULIE R FEREBA FILIVM SIMVKEM SUI  
NECMEV S EST. NEC MISUMLAT SE A VELLEM ESSET, MEVS  
ET <sup>EGO (sic)</sup> VOLEBAM VT MEVS ESSET*

## Zetema.

*Mulier ferebat filium simulem sui ;  
Nec meus est, nec mi simulat, sed vellem esset meus,  
Et ego volebam ut meus esset.*

which requires no other explanation than the

ἥ καλὸν, δέκα πιλη τίκτα γονιῶσιν ίσα

of Nossis, or the

*Laudantur simili prole puerperæ*

of Horace.\*

To the specimens of bad spelling given a little above, I add one of peculiar orthography : —

N I I M O I S T B I I L L V S N I S I Q V I A M A V I T

that is,

*Nemo est bellus, nisi qui amavit : †*

where the II stand for E, as in a metrical epitaph in the Vatican, of which the first line is

T I I L A P I S O P T I I S T O R L I I V I T I I R S V P I I R O S S A R E S I D A S.

that is,

*Te lapis optestor, leviter super ossa residas !*

There are some other instances of this here, but not many. 

\* Od. iv. 5. 21.

† Martial, iii. 63. : —

*Bellus, fœmineas tota qui luce cathedras*

*Desidet, atque aliqua semper in aure sonat.*

Let me now point out to you one or two poetical fragments : —

Q<sup>U</sup>ISQ<sup>U</sup>IS A<sup>M</sup>A<sup>T</sup>O<sup>R</sup>E<sup>R</sup>IT<sup>S</sup> C<sup>Y</sup>TH<sup>I</sup>A<sup>E</sup> L<sup>I</sup>C<sup>E</sup>T<sup>A</sup>M<sup>B</sup>E<sup>T</sup>O<sup>R</sup>I<sup>S</sup>  
N<sup>E</sup>M<sup>O</sup> A<sup>D</sup>E<sup>O</sup> U<sup>T</sup> F<sup>E</sup>R<sup>I</sup>A<sup>T</sup> L<sup>A</sup>N<sup>A</sup>L<sup>A</sup>V<sup>E</sup> S<sup>E</sup>E<sup>V</sup>O<sup>L</sup>E<sup>T</sup>

You perceive here two lines of Propertius \*, taken from the elegy in which he describes his evening walk from Rome to Tibur. They are as follows : —

*Quisquis amator erit, Scythiae licet ambulet oris,  
Nemo adeo ut feriat barbarus esse volet.*

To those who are fond of various readings each line will supply one : the former, *Scythiae* for *Scythicis*, as it stands in all the MSS. ; the latter, *feriat* for *noeat*, which is the better reading of the two.

This distich has experienced a fate similar to that of the other writings of Propertius. The earliest MS. of his poems was not found till the middle of the XVth century, when they were drawn forth from beneath some casks in a wine-cellar. These two lines have lain from the first century to the eighteenth, under the ashes of a volcano.

Perhaps you may be able to point out the author (who does not occur to me) of the following distich : —

S<sup>E</sup>R<sup>I</sup>B<sup>I</sup>NT<sup>M</sup>I<sup>D</sup>I<sup>S</sup>T<sup>A</sup>M<sup>O</sup>R<sup>M</sup>O<sup>S</sup>T<sup>R</sup>A<sup>T</sup>Q<sup>U</sup>I<sup>V</sup> I<sup>A</sup>D<sup>O</sup>  
A<sup>H</sup>A<sup>M</sup>A<sup>M</sup>S<sup>I</sup>N<sup>I</sup>T<sup>I</sup>S<sup>I</sup>D<sup>I</sup>V<sup>S</sup> S<sup>E</sup>V<sup>I</sup>L<sup>I</sup>M

which seems to be,

*Scriptenti mi<sup>d</sup> dictat Amor, mostratque Cupido ;  
Ah peream ! sine te si Deus esse velim.*

\* Propert. iii. 14. 14.

that is,

Without thee, *preium ætas altera sordet.*

The turn of the phrase resembles Virgil's \* lines to Antonius Musa : —

*Dispeream si te fuerit mihi carior alter;  
Alter enim quis te dulcior esse potest?*

And the sentiment, in which the word *Deus* † is used as a term for expressing a state of the greatest felicity, reminds us of the *φαίνεται μοι χῆρος ἵσος θεοῖσιν* of Sappho, and its version by the Latin poet; and the *si quis in cælum ascendisset*, naturamque mundi et pulchritudinem siderum perspexisset, *insuarem illam admirationem ei fore, quæ jucundissima fuisse si aliquem cui narraret habuisset*, of Cicero ‡ in his *De Amicitia*, and more forcibly of his *Ne viram*, mi Attice, *si mihi μακάρων νῆσοι tanti sunt, ut sine te sim.*

You may also excrise your ingenuity in discovering the author and the sense of the following hexameter : —

QV.EMMIDIGREDIENS  
MAGNIS ALAUDIBUS  
OPC/

*Quoniam digrediens magnis a laudibus Oppi?*

\* Catall. xiii. 4.

† Terent. Hecyr. v. 4. 3. : —

*Deus sum*

*Si hoc ita est.*

‡ C. 23. Ep. Att. xii. 3. *Compare* Catull. lxv.

*" Nulli se mulier dicis mea nubere malle*

*Quam mihi, non si se Juppiter ipse petat."*

Is it a remonstrance from a client to a pleader who was digressing from his main subject to a minor point in the cause? So the poet expostulates with himself:—

*Sed quid ego a primo digressus carmine plura  
Commemorem? \**

This, I say, may be a *remonstrance* to a pleader, as the following distich seems to be an expression of *gratitude* to one, from some client who had gained his cause by his advocate's ability, like that acknowledgement to Cicero for his eloquence from his grateful client Catullus †,

*Disertissime Romuli nepotum, &c.*

The two lines are

LITTERA THEORIANI SEMPER DICTA SALVET  
NOMINE NUNC DEXTRI TEMPUS IN OMNE MANET.

OR,

*Littera Theoriani semper dicta salutem  
Nomine nunc dextri tempus in omne manet.*

The sense of which seems to be, that the *littera* ‡ *capitalis* with which the name of Theorianes begins, which was known *before*, only as an intimation of death,—the *nigrum Theta* of condemned § criminals, as the x was of condemned *words*,—had *now*, by the influence of its bearer, who was

\* Catull. Ixiv. 115.

† Catull. xlii.

‡ *Cp.* the *Littera Longa* in *Plaut. Aulul.* I. i. 38.

§ *Persius*, iv. 13. Cf. *Martial*, vii. 57.

“ Nostri mortiferum Quesitoris, Castrice, signum,  
Est opere pretium discere theta novum.”

probably an *insigne mæstis præsidium reis*, become a symbol of safety instead of destruction.

As an illustration of the well-known meaning of this letter, I may be allowed to refer to an inscription, I believe unpublished, which is preserved in the museum at Naples. It is a titulus, or catalogue of a *familia*: it consists of five columns, and is entitled

LIBERTORUM ET FAMIL . . . .

In it occur the names of certain slaves and freedmen, with the ◦ prefixed, indicating that they were dead, as

- ALEXANDER VIL. (*i. e.* villicus)
- TYRANNUS MEDICUS
- PHÆBUS VIL.

There is also in the same collection a muster-roll of soldiers\* to which the same observation is applicable: and at Pompeii, on the wall of the corridor between the two theatres,

◦ EPAPHRODIT . . .

is still legible. Near the same spot as the last inscription, is a memorial of one of the noblest, bravest, and most eloquent men of his age—one who called Cicero, Horace, Tibullus, and Augustus, friends. It was probably addressed to him when he was setting out on one of his campaigns, from which he returned covered with glory;

\* Alexander ab Alex. iii. 5. Per ◦ defunctorum in acie tribunos annotare prodiderunt.

VALE MESALA FAC ME  
AMES*Vale Mesala\* (sic) fac me ames.*

The writer of the following iambics, legible on the same wall of the Basilica, seems to have been a second Ofellus, who, when sitting down to his usual dinner of *olus fumosæ cum pede pernae*, had been surprised, and not very agreeably, by the arrival of an unexpected guest.

QUO IRE PERNA COCTA EST, SI CONVIVÆ ADPONITUR  
NOR GUSTAT PERNA, LINGIT OLLAM AUT CACCABUM

that is,

*Quo perna cocta est, si convivæ adponitur,  
Non gustat pernam, lingit ollam aut caccabum.†*

"One who has only a fitch of bacon for his dinner, if it is set before a guest in addition to himself, has nothing to do but to dine off an empty plate."

Here is a moral maxim, also in iambic verse:—

MINIMUM MALVM FIT CONTEMNENDO MAXIMUM  
QUOD CREDEM{ 3 ERIT MINUS

*Minimum malum fit contemnendo maximum,  
Quod †, crede mi, non contemnendo erit minus.*

\* M. Valerius Messala Corvinus, the "fulgentissimus juvenis" of Velleius, ii. 71.

† The word *άκκασες* is explained by Cassabon, Athen. i. c. 8. and iv. c. 20. ed. Schäfer. *Olla* and *caccabum* are the words in the Latin versions of 1 Sam. ii. 14.

† So, perhaps, the hiatus may be supplied.

Purporting that the smallest evils, by slighting them, become greatest ; and the greatest, by not doing so, become less.

Here another of a similar character and metre,—

*NON EST EXSILIUM EX PATRIA* *frumentorum*

which seems to say,

*Non est exsiliū ex patriā sapientibus.*

You remember the story—rendered famous by the application of Burke—of Diogenes and the people of Sinope ; and the *Omne solum forti patria est* of Ovid was often in the mouth, if never in the heart, of Bolingbroke.\* These two last inscriptions were perhaps left here by some unfortunate defendants, when they quitted the Court after an unfavourable sentence had been passed upon them.

The learned author of “ The Introduction to the Literature of Europe †,” in tracing the continuance of Latin in the seventh century, cites what seems to be a song of a female slave in rhymed trochaics, which he considers to be as old as the destruction of the Empire, and which, if so, is a pleasing specimen of the poetry of that time. With that fragment I would compare another very brief one, which you may read here —

*SARRA NON BELLE FACIS*  
*SOLVM MERELINQVIS*  
*DEBILIS* *~~~~~*

\* Cf. Cic. *Tus. Quest.* v. 37., where the subject is treated at large.

† Vol. i. p. 31.

that is,

*Sarra non belle facis,  
Solum me relinquis :  
Debilis \*\*\**

These are, as you see, trochaics, and rhymed ones ; they show that popular songs in the metre to which that writer alludes, are as old as the Augustan age.\*

Here is a warning against the use of *calidi fontes*, such as the neighbouring ones of Baiae or Cumæ, to persons in peculiar circumstances.

Q[uo]d si quis amat calidum non debet fontibus uti :  
Nam nemo a flaminis usus amare potest.

*Quisquis amat, calidus non debet fontibus uti ;  
Nam nemo flaminis usus amare potest.*

All these inscriptions, to which I might add others, exist on the walls of the Basilica.

In leaving this building, in the way to what is called the *Forum Nundinarium*, we pass through a street now termed the *Strada de' Teatri*.

On the plaster wall of the third house on the right as you descend that street, you see traced in red letters an advertisement concerning the loss of a wine-vessel, which was stolen from this shop in the time of Horace's thieves, Cœlius and Birrhius. It runs thus :—

\* Compare

Ego nolo Cæsar esse  
Ambulare per pruinæ, &c.

and other similar effusions in Suetonius. Cf. Senten. ad Terentian. Maur. p. 182.

V R M V N A R I A P E R I I T D E T A B E R N A  
 \*  
 S E I E A M Q V I S R E T V L E R I T  
 D A B V N T V R  
 H C L X V S E I F V R E M  
 Q V I A B D V X E R I T  
 \*  
 D A B I T V R D V P L V M  
 A V A R I O

or,

Urna vīaria periit de tabernā,  
 Sei eam quis retulerit  
 Dabuntur  
 H. S. L X V : Sei furem,  
 qui abduxerit,  
 dabitur duplum  
 A Vario.

On the use of the word *periit* in the sense of *is lost*, there are some learned observations in Bentley's † Remarks on Free-thinking; but the best illustration, not merely of this word, but of the whole inscription, is that agreeable Elegy of Propertius ‡, in which he advertises the loss of his pocket-book, and offers a reward for its discovery.

\* These words are doubtful.

† P. 275. Cf. The same use of θύρα in Aristoph. Ran. 983. :—  
 τὸ τρυγίας τὸ πιραντίς  
 τιθύραί μει.

‡ iii. xxiii.

Ergo tam doctœ nobis *periere* tabellœ,  
 Scripta quibus pariter tot *periere* bona.  
 \* \* \* \* \*  
 Quas si quis mibi *rettulerit*, donabitur auro :  
 Quis pro divitiis ligna retenta velit ?  
 I, puer, et citus hæc aliqua propone tabella,  
 Et dominum Esquiliis scribe habitare tuum.

A similar advertisement,—a parody of course,—is preserved in Petronius \*, where the notice is given *vivæ voce* by a crier who, instead of a bell, carries a lighted torch, which he shakes to attract notice. It is as follows:—

PUER IN BALNEO ABERRAVIT  
 SI QUIS EUM REDDERE  
 AUT COMMONSTRARE  
 VOLUERIT  
 ACCIPIET NUMMOS MILLE.

Passing through this street, we arrive at the larger of the two theatres. It is on the right. On the outside of the stage wall, toward the Forum Nundinarium, you will see some ancient names inscribed. They are in *Greek* characters, and, as far as I am aware, in the *only* Greek characters which occur on the walls of Pompeii.† Probably they are the names of persons connected with the theatre; and, if so, they lead to the inference, otherwise probable, that *Greek* plays were the favorite dramatic literature of Pompeii. The names are

\* P. 169.

† The *Ocean* inscriptions will be found in Iorio's *Viaggio a Pompei*.

ΔΙΩΦΑΝΤΟΣ  
 ΑΔΩΝΙΟΣ  
 ΗΛΙΟΔΩΡΟΣ  
 ΔΙΟΓΕΝΗΣ  
 - - -  
 ΑΤΤΟΛΩΔΩΡΟΣ  
 ΑΤΤΟΛΟΝΙΟΣ  
 ΕΠΛΓΑΘΟΣ

Διόφαντος (sic)

<sup>2</sup>Αδώνιος

Ηλιόδωρος

Διογένης

<sup>2</sup>Απολάδωρος (sic)

<sup>2</sup>Απολένιος (sic)

<sup>2</sup>Επάγαθος

They are not, as you will observe, very correctly written, and were probably inscribed by some theatrical amateur of the place.

From the theatre of Pompeii we will pass to what now remains of the cellars of its former inhabitants. These are now under the special care of the *custode* of the place. He will unlock for us the curiosities of his *cella promptuaria*. Here you see the *amphoræ* which served to regale the Pompeians of old. To this fictile *diota* Horace might have written an ode. *That* may have imbibed the mellowing smoke in the consulship of Tullus: *this* may have

remembered the Marsic war; another have been racked off *capillato consule*. To most of them indeed now

— *patriam\* titulumque senectus*  
Delevit multa veteris fuligine testæ.

But still there are one or two in the collection which contained wine, whose age we still read inscribed on their terra-cotta sides (οὗ τὴν ἡλικίαν ἀναγιγνώσκομεν ἐπιγεγραμένην τοῖς κεραμίοις †).

On one, for instance, we decipher the letters

*TVLO M. ASINIO COS  
FUNDAN*

that is,

[Cosso Cornelio Len] *tulo*  
*M. Asinio* (Agrippa) *Consulibus*  
*Fundanum.*

Indicating that this vessel once held wine made in the year A.D. 25., at Fundi, to the excellence of whose produce Martial bears testimony, —

Haec *Fundana* tulit felix auctumnum ‡ Opimi :

And,

*Cæcuba Fundanis generosa coquuntur Amyclis,*  
*Vitis et in mediâ nata palude viret.*

\* Juvenal, v. 94. ; Martial, l. 106. Exuit annosā mores nomenque senectā. Heindorf, Hor. p. 212.

† Galen ap. Bentl. Hor. Od. III. xxi. 5. Cf. Petron. p. 59. Amphore allata quarum in cervicibus pittacia affixa cum hoc titulo, Falernum Opimianum annorum C. Cf. Turneb. Advers. i. 1.

‡ xlii. 113. and 115. Cf. Harduin. Plin. N. H. xiv. 5. Cæcubo generositas celeberrima in palustribus populeis sinu Amyclano (near Fundi).

Pompeii was destroyed on the 25th of August, A.D. 79., so that this wine, if not yet consumed at the time of the city's destruction, was then more than half a century old; about eight years older than that which, born in the same consulship as himself, was reserved by Horace for the entertainment of the generous and learned Messala.\*

On a second of these *amphoræ* we read,

I A  
M AVRELIO SOTERI

On a third,

AK  
M · CAESI  
CELERIS

On a fourth, the tempting title,

LIGUAMENT  
OPTIMUM

*Liquamen Optimum!*

\* Ode iii. 21.

But, alas! for the curious connoisseur, this *delicious beverage* has been drained *faeces tenuis*; and not even does its fragrance remain to tell of its virtue.

Having, my dear P., thus called your attention to some of these vestiges of the manners and feelings of a distant age, I may remark, that we are furnished by these fragments with some curious evidence concerning the poetical taste, pervading, as it seems, the lower orders of the people of the period to which they belong. We receive from them some information too, concerning the orthography and written characters commonly in use in this part of Italy during the Augustan age.\* We are supplied with a solution in the negative to the question whether a cursive character was employed in the writings of that period. We are enabled to prove, against the theories of L. Aretino, Cardinal Bembo, Strozzi, and the learned Scipio Maffei†, that the *vernacular* language of that era did not differ, as they maintain, from the *learned* dialect; and that *no* dialect, as they imagine, similar to the modern Italian, was then familiarly in use. These inferences may be drawn from the specimens now submitted to your notice. They are selected from a larger number which I might have adduced. But I content

\* Tiraboschi, *Storia*, iii. 1. page 4. Leonardo Bruni soprannominato l'Aretino eruditissimo e colto scrittore del XV. secolo pensò e lusingossi di dimostrare che la *lingua Italiana* sia antica al pari della *Latina*, e che amendue al tempo medesimo fossero usate in Roma: la prima dal rozzo popolo e ne' familiari ragionamenti; la seconda dai dotti scrivendo e parlando nelle pubbliche assemblee.

† Ibid. p. 7., who supposes that the Italian language arose dall' abbandonare il parlar colto ed elegante, e dall' introdursi il popolar grossolano.

myself with these examples, which are, I trust, not so copious as to cause you much weariness, and may yet prove sufficient to excite the attention of others who have better opportunities than myself of making additions to their number.

There is one point more. You will perhaps inquire whether there are not *other* specimens of a different character, which, from their nature, I feel it right to *suppress*. There are ; and *because* I suppress them, it is due to the cause of truth, which even these trifles serve, not only to confess, but openly to avow this ; for a more important inference than any of those to which I have just alluded may be drawn from these instances. I do not conceal their existence ; far from it : I profess gratitude to God, by whose wonderful order this city was overwhelmed, for their very *preservation* during so many centuries to this day. Who laments the existence of such writers as Catullus, Juvenal, and Martial ? Who would annihilate them ? Nay, did not, in their works, the passages still survive which are similar to the instances of which I speak as found in this place, blended with efforts of mental vigour, of acuteness, and of poetical power, which those authors exhibit, a man might perhaps wish that he himself had lived in an age eminent for all the luxurious accomplishments which art and intellect could supply. But these passages forbid him ; they dispel the delusion which wit and poetry might produce ; they are the dead bones that whiten on the isle of the Sircns ; they remind him how and from what he has escaped. And so in this city of Pompeii, surrounded as we are by the brilliant productions of painting and sculpture, beautiful even in decay, and by the

exquisite remains of the soft refinements with which its ancient inhabitants charmed their voluptuous hours, we might be dazzled by their fascination, and almost wish that we had lived as contemporaries with them. But the inscriptions to which I allude warn us against this; they show us with what moral depravity these graceful embellishments were allied. Therefore we neither envy them, nor are we prone to believe that man's Art or Intellect will ever reform the world. We no longer indulge in such a dream, nor question the justice of Providence which buried Pompeii in the dust. *Cum Deus censor esset, Impietas ignium meruit imbres, quo magis de montibus suis Campania timeat erupta Pompeios.*\*

Believe me,

My dear P——,

Yours very truly,

CHR. WORDSWORTH.

\* *Vide Tertullian de Pallio*, p. 7. Salmas.

THE END.

---

#### ERRATA IN WOODCUTS.

Page 17. line 3. from bottom, for "fereba" read "ferebat."  
 Page 19. line 5. from bottom, for "mostratq" read "mostratque."

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